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THE

HISTORY

Of the Most Renowned

Queen Elizabeth,

And Her Great Favourite,

The Earl of ESSEX.

In Two PARTS.

A ROMANCE.

London: Printed by and for *W. O.* and sold by *C. Bates*, at the Sun and Bible, in *Gilt-spur-street*, near *Pye-corner*.

THE History of Queen *ELIZABETH*, AND HER *Great Favourite the Earl of* Eſſex, &c.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The Firſt Part.

THE extraordinary Merits of the Earl of *Eſſex*, the high Dignities that he enjoyed, and the great Favour the Queen had ſo often ſhewn him, were Matter of different Speculations to thoſe who were Spectators of his ſudden Fall: They well knew that the Queen had conferr'd upon him the great Honours of the Kingdom; and that even at the time of his Fall, he was General of her Army againſt the Earl of *Tyrone*, who had rais'd a Rebellion in *Ireland*: And yet ſo very powerful were his Enemies, that all his Precautions were in vain; he ſaw, but could not avert his Fate: for after all his ſtrenuous Efforts, he was confin'd a Priſoner in his own Houſe. And they who were afraid he wou'd one Day over-top 'em all, reſolu'd to cruſh him at once.

But tho' the Earl of *Eſſex* had indeed done great Services by his Valour, to the State; and the Queen wanted neither Wiſdom to diſcern it, nor Goodneſs to reward it, yet did the Earl's Advancement proceed from a more ſecret Cauſe, inſomuch that if he had never ſignaliz'd himſelf by his great Actions, yet had the Queen retain'd ſuch a Kindneſs for him, as had plac'd him in her Thoughts above all the reſt of her Subjects; and that before he could ptetend to any thing by his Services.

Queen *Elizabeth* was indeed arriv'd to a Pitch of Glory above all the Women in that Age, not only for her high Dignity, but alſo for thoſe extraordinary Qualities of her Mind, her Courage, her Wiſdom and her Conduct: But all theſe were ſo far from being Proof againſt the Power of Love, that they made that Paſſion burn more fiercely: And this it was that made her have ſo great a Tenderneſs for this unfortunate Earl, when he appear'd as a Criminal: This it was that warded off the Blow ſo long, when the Hand of Juſtice was

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held

held up againſt him. For however he happen'd to fall under her Diſpleaſure, yet ſhe was ſo far from taking Delight in his Sufferings, that ſhe conceiv'd an Abhorrence of thoſe mercileſs Maxims that oppos'd her ſofter Inclinations.

But the Queen could not forbear loving, yet ſhe uſed all imaginable Caution to prevent the Diſcovery of that Paſſion it was not in her Power to conceal; this made her keep her Bed, and admit of no Company, but that of the Counteſs of *Nottingham*: Before her ſhe freely gave Vent to her Tears, the Cauſe whereof the Counteſs could only conjecture. She had indeed entertain'd ſome Suſpicions of the Queen's Paſſions for *Eſſex*, and therefore thought herſelf more than a little concern'd to find out the Myſtery. But this was ſuch a tender Point as was to be done with a great deal of Caution; and therefore the Counteſs thought it beſt to ſay but little. But the Queen's Grief was too extream to be kept in; and her Sighs, and frequent repeating of *Eſſex* his Name, confirm'd the Counteſs of the Truth of what before ſhe could not be aſſured of: But the Counteſs had that Command over herſelf, that it was not difficult for her to conceal her being concern'd in that Adventure. So that ſeeming only ſenſible of the Queen's Diſquiet, ſhe endeavour'd by all means to comfort her; putting her in Mind how ſerviceable her Vertue might be to her, that Vertue which had ſo long render'd her the Wonder of the World.

Ah Madam! (ſaid the Queen, interrupting the Counteſs) *you do not yet know me; the Force I have long put upon myſelf, has made you think perhaps that the Height of my Spirit has rais'd me above the Infirmities of Nature; and the Greatneſs of my Thoughts ſecur'd me from the Troubles of Life: But alas! the Caſe is otherwiſe; for poor* Elizabeth *is a Slave to her Weakneſs; and has all this while but ſacrific'd to Reputation, all the Quiet of her Soul, and Happineſs of her Days: 'Tis high time, Madam, to reveal the Myſtery: Alas! my Heart is ſenſible and ſuſceptible of the deepeſt Impreſſions: And what I have in Appearance condemn'd moſt, is perhaps the only thing that has moſt Power over me. The Earl of* Eſſex *is no leſs famous for the Victory gain'd over my Heart, than for his Treaſon againſt me: And I who have maintain'd the Freedom of my Sex, and preſerv'd the Liberty of my Affection from ſubmitting to the Efforts of all the Princes of* Europe, *and the greateſt of my Subjects have now the Misfortune to find my Inclinations violently ſway'd in Favour of a Perſon as Ungrateful as Faithleſs. You know what I have done to raiſe him, nor can you be ignorant how ill he hath requited me by his Crimes: A Man who being Governour of* Ireland, *General of my Army, in quiet Poſſeſſion of the beſt Offices of my Kingdom, and Maſter of my Affection; yet could not forbear conſpiring againſt that Authority I was too much inclin'd to give him a Share of: And perhaps againſt a Life I took no other Pleaſure in, but the Opportunity I had by it, to make him happy.* Thus far the Queen proceeded; but it was not in her Power to

carry on her Discourse any farther. But the Countess finding she had more than an ordinary Interest therein was so much the more willing to have it continu'd: And therefore under Pretence of comforting the Queen, prevail'd with her to declare herself farther.

No, no, Madam, said the Queen in Reply to what the Countess said) *There's no Hope of Comfort for me, if the Earl of* Essex *dye; you may easily guess, by what his Imprisonment hath done, what I am like to be reduc'd to by his Death: For though I abhor his Crimes, I have a Kindness for his Person; which makes me afraid, that as I have been so fooliſh to let him know it, I shall pardon him all. You are ignorant of his Carriage towards me; and perhaps my Affection will as easily find Excuses for his Ingratitude, as it did for my Kindness. I will give you the Relation of it; but I conjure you to shew me so plainly the Shame I have expas'd my self to, by my Passion, that I may now prevail with my self to abandon the most ungrateful of Men, to the Rigour of his Fate.*

I shall not need to give you any Account of Matters foreign to my present Design, nor shew the Interest of *England* any other ways than as the Earl of *Essex* is concern'd in it. Let it suffice that upon the Death of my Sister, I obtain'd the Possession of the Throne, was belov'd and ador'd by my People, and happy even beyound my Hopes. But a high Station is not always attended with the most pleasant Enjoyments: For that soft Repose of which I had so pleasing a Prospect in the beginning of my Reign, blew over in a little time to a more tempestuous Season.

Being establish'd on the Throne, I found my Court was quickly filled with Suitors of the highest Rank, Princes contending who should merit best the Choice, 'twas in my Power to make both a Husband and a King at once. Those that I thought had most Right to pretend to it, were the Earls of *Somerset*, *Leicester*, *Arundel*, and *Hertford*. But finding my self uneasie through their Importunities, I was forc'd to let them know, I design'd only to be married to a single Life; and the better to content 'em, I advanc'd 'em by considerable Employments; with which they were so well satisfied, that three of them renounc'd those Hopes they had made some Pretensions to. But *Leicester*, whose Flame or Ambition was greater (or at least more constant) than the rest, would not so soon part with his Pretensions, but still flatter'd himself with the Hopes of succeeding at last. But he hoped in vain; Fate had forbid the Banes, and my Affections run in another Channel.

It was then the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Westmoreland* rebell'd, that the Earl of *Essex* signaliz'd himself against 'em, and making about that time his first Appearance at Court, soon became acceptable to me, and pleas'd me before he knew it.

And although those that first presented him to me, sufficiently commended him, I was too well perswaded of his Merit, to need any of their Helps, for I no sooner saw him, but I beheld him as an extraordinary Person;

Perſon; and thought him the more ſo, to affect him ſo much at the ſight The Reception I gave him was anſwerable to his Merit; and the Acknowledgments he made me were ſuch as became him; which made me ſo much indulge my Inclination.

'Twas from the Moment that I ſaw him firſt, that I may date the Loſs of my Repoſe, and then 'twas I became firſt acquainted with that Uneaſineſs which before I had been a Stranger to: And tho' I made the utmoſt Efforts to reſiſt it, yet I was fyrc'd to acknowledge the Cauſe. And all the Oppoſition I made, ſerv'd only to make the Triumphs of his Victory the more illuſtrious. But it is impoſſible for any to comprehend the Diſorder I found in my Breaſt, unleſs it be thoſe that are acquainted with the Reſentments of a great Soul, jealous of its Repntation, and yet compell'd to give it up to the Power of ungovernable Paſſion, I could not look off of him, and yet was afraid leſt my Eyes ſhould diſcover my Weakneſs to the World. And when I ſhun'd the ſight of his Eyes, I carry'd the Idea of his Perſon in my Heart. And though I was angry with my ſelf for what I did, yet ſo violently had Love ſeiz'd my Heart, that in vain I ſummon'd the Aſſiſtance of my Reaſon to deface it. So that I inſenſibly gave up myſelf as a Captive to thoſe powerful Inclinations which had made me entertain ſuch kind and pleaſing Idea's of the Perſon of the Earl of *Eſſex*. And making uſe of the Services he had done me againſt the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Weſtmoreland*, and the Merits of his Father, as a Ground for my Favour, that ſo the true Cauſe of it might not be diſcover'd, I made him Knight of the Garter, and Maſter of the Horſe, and one of my privy Council, though he was then under Age.

Thus was I conſtrain'd, that I might indulge my Weakneſs, to ſmother the Dictates of Reaſon; and heap up freſh Honours upon him, that I might cheriſh my kind Inclinations for him; for the higher I advanc'd him, the nearer he was to my Perſon, and the more Opportunity I had to gratifie the Complaiſance I had for him. And how ungrateful ſoever I have found him ſince, he then appear'd to me all kind and languiſhing: And if it was not ſo, yet I had Tenderneſs enough for him to make ſuch a Conſtruction of his minuteſt Actions.

But notwithſtanding all my Artifice, I could not blind the Earl of *Leiceſter*'s jealous Eyes, who ſoon look'd upon the Earl of *Eſſex*, as a Perſon of ſufficient Merit to croſs his Pretenſions; and therefore he made it his Buſineſs to ſupplant him; which I quickly perceiv'd, and preſently foreſaw the fatal Conſequences my Kindneſs might create between two ſuch conſiderable Perſons: So that I was forced to diſſemble a greater Complaiſance for *Leiceſter*, than I was wont to ſhew him, that my real Kindneſs for *Eſſex* might be leſs diſcover'd.

And now the King of *Sweden*, the Emperour for his Son, and the Duke of *Anjou*, made their ſeveral Courts to me; which though I receiv'd

with

with that Reſpect as became me; yet I ſo order'd the Matter, that their Ambaſſadors went home without any Fruit of their Ambaſſy.

But hitherto the real Motives of my refuſing Marriage with theſe Princes, has remain'd unknown, having never diſcover'd it till now: However the Interpretations that the World was pleas'd to make of it, tended to the increaſe of my Glory: And I was admir'd for my Contempt of Love, even then when I was an unfortunate Subject of the Power thereof.

However, my Averſion for Foreign Alliances, reviv'd the Earl of *Leiceſter*'s declining Hopes; and even *Eſſex* himſelf ſeem'd over-joy'd thereat: *Not* (ſaid he, as I was told afterwards) *but that the Queen acts diſcreetly in all ſhe does; and her Choice, had ſhe made one, had been decent and juſt: But that I think her ſo fit to Reign alone, that I could not, without extream Trouble, ſee her ſhare her Authority with a Husband, who perhaps wou'd in time be her Maſter.* The Conſtruction I made of the Earl of *Eſſex*'s Zeal, was very agreeable to me, and the Deſign I had of Engaging his Affections; which I ſo paſſionately deſir'd, that I believ'd it accompliſh'd. And that 'twas the Slight I put upon Kings, was the only thing that with-held him from declaring his Paſſion.

Soon after I had another Royal Suitor; for the Duke of *Alanſon*, tho' his Brother had been refuſed, reſolv'd to try his Fortune alſo; and that his Addreſſes might be Effectual, wou'd needs come himſelf: nor cou'd I deny my Conſent for his Voyage to *London:* When, after all the Advantages, he pleaded in his Favour, the Earl of *Eſſex* loſt not the Aſcendant he had over me; nay, he gain'd more upon me by that Prince's ſtay in *England*; for he was always at my Elbow; not but that the Earl of *Leiceſter* alſo attended me with as much Diligence, tho' not with the ſame Regard from me. In fine, I brought ſo many Objections againſt the Duke of *Alanſon*'s Deſign, that he was conſtrain'd to give it over, and yet he return'd without any Cauſe of Complaint.

After the Death of the Queen of Scots, the King of *Spain* enter'd into a League with the Pope againſt me; and having declar'd againſt my Right to the Crown, they joyntly endeavour'd to pull it from my Head. For the Spaniards made themſelves Maſters of *Daventer*, and the Duke of *Parma* laid Siege to *Sluys*. I then thought it high time to provide for defending my Realms; ſo that the Earl of *Leiceſter* was ſent away with all the Nobility of the Kingdom, in the Head of a numerous Army; and the Earl of *Eſſex* was one of the firſt to follow him. And tho' I ſcarce knew how to let him go, yet was I unwilling the Man I had ſuch a Kindneſs for, ſhould be idle at Home, when an Opportunity offer'd by glorious Actions abroad, to merit the Tenderneſs I had for him.

It will be Time miſ-ſpent to relate all the Circumſtances of a War, which perhaps you may be well enough inform'd of; nor does it concern what I am deſirous to relate to you. Let it ſuffice therefore to ſay,

That

That Heaven ſignaliz'd the Juſtice of our Cauſe by its Succeſs, the very Wind having favour'd our ſide.

When the Generals of my Army arriv'd at *London*, I was carry'd in Triumph to St. *Paul*'s: Where I muſt bluſh to own, That my Joy to ſee the Earl of *Eſſex*, was greater than that for the Victory over our Enemies. And amongſt all the numerous Perſons of ſeveral Ranks, I cou'd eaſily diſtinguiſh the Perſon of the Earl; on whom my Eyes were always fixt, unleſs ſometimes to blind the Earl of *Leiceſter*, I caſt a Look on him.

It was not long after this Expedition, the Earl of *Eſſex* fell into ſo deep a Melancholy, and I was the firſt that took notice of it, and gheſs'd it the Effect of ſome Paſſion he was unwilling to diſcloſe, and fancy'd my ſelf to be the Object of it; and ſometimes ſecretly wiſh'd he wou'd have taken the Boldneſs to declare himſelf. But the Confuſion of ſuch a Declaration, and the Conſequence of it, ſoon made me change my Mind. And yet (ſo variouſly my Mind was agitated) I ſcarce cou'd tell what to reſolve upon) nor even what to wiſh: I knew I had a mighty Tenderneſs for *Eſſex*, and fain I wou'd have had him anſwer'd mine with a reciprocal Affection. And this was all the Reſolution I cou'd come to.

But ſtill the Earl of *Eſſex* had a Cloud upon his Brows; and 'twas a Grief to me to ſee him Grieve; and fancying ſtill my ſelf to be the Cauſe, I was impatient till I knew the Certainty, and cou'd receive no Satisfaction till he had declar'd himſelf. He wanted not an Opportunity to do it, having full Liberty of free Acceſs to me. But, that I might not too much expoſe my Reputation, by forcing of him to declare his Paſſion, I made a ſhew of having an extream Deſign to favour *Leiceſter*, who upon his late Victories, had entertained freſh Hopes.

And therefore, to bring this about, as the Earl of *Eſſex* came one Day to thank me for the Government of *Ireland*, which I but lately had beſtow'd upon him: I was reſolv'd to make uſe of that Opportunity to bring about what I deſign'd. And, as he was a making his Acknowledgments, *My Lord*, (ſaid I) *you have no need to enlarge your ſelf on what I am already well aſſur'd of. I take a Delight in your Advancement; and only deſire I cou'd as eaſily remove your Melancholy, as I am pleas'd to give you a new Teſtimony of the Senſe I have of your Services. You may in your Turn oblige me,* (added I) *who am fallen into a troubleſome Conjuncture; and find a more than ordinary Difficulty in reducing my Affections into a Compliance with the Neceſſity of State. It preſſes me hard to provide* England *a King; becauſe the Choice is difficult, and I have no mind to make it among Foreigners. You are Diſcreet, and (I have ſome Reaſon to believe) not the leaſt Loving of my Subjects. I will take your Advice, ſpeak your Mind freely, which of my Subjects it is, that you think moſt worthy of this high Dignity.*

When I had ſaid this, I fix'd my Eyes upon him with ſo kind and languiſhing a Look, as wou'd have inſpir'd the moſt Fearful with Boldneſs;

and

And I cou'd not but take notice, that there was in his Eyes an extraordinary Emotion, and all the Symptoms of ſome important Secret ready to be deliver'd. The Point indeed appear'd tender, but all Things flatter'd my Imagination, that it wou'd be what I wiſh'd it.

Your Majeſty's Reſolution (anſwer'd the Earl) *will render a Man more Glorious by the Quality of your Husband, than of the greateſt Monarch upon Earth. Remember* (ſaid I) *that I expect not a Panegyrick, but Advice from you: And that your Buſineſs at preſent is to Nominate the Man I am to make King, and not to commend his good Fortune in being ſo. The Buſineſs is ſo nice, Madam,* (reply'd the Earl) *I dare not ſpeak my Mind, tho' your Majeſty requires it. Did you know* (ſaid I) *what moves me to this Confidence in you, you would perhaps expreſs your ſelf with a great deal more freedom. But, becauſe to bring you to it, I muſt advance further, Tell me whether you think the Earl of* Leiceſter *deſerves to be your Prince? The Earl of* Leiceſter, (anſwer'd he) *is well born, and a Perſon of great Merit, and will anſwer the Honour your Majeſty intends him. Is that all you have to ſay to me?* (ſaid I.) *Ah! Madam,* (anſwer'd he with a Sigh, which made me expect ſomething more pleaſing) *I ſhould have more to ſay to you for my ſelf, than the Earl of* Leiceſter. *What hinders you?* (ſaid I.) *The Reſpect I have for your Majeſty,* (anſwer'd he.) *I am in Love, Madam; and 'tis not a thing fitting to make my Queen my Confident.* I bluſh'd at theſe Words, and was in a mind not to proceed further; but when I look'd upon him, it was impoſſible for me not to declare my Weakneſs: and therefore I thus reply'd to what he ſaid laſt: *I have that Value for you, my Lord, that I find no Averſion to be of your Counſel. Well, Madam, ſince you will have it ſo,* reply'd he, *I muſt acquaint you, that I am moſt paſſionately enamour'd with the Counteſs of* Rutland: *and that I cannot Live, without your Majeſty conſents that ſhe ſhall make me Happy.*

It is not eaſie to gheſs how much I was confounded at the defeating of my Hopes by this Explication; having flatter'd my ſelf, that it was me he wou'd have nam'd, as the Object of his Paſſion: It was then, that I ſtood in need of all the Haughtineſs of my Nature; and I had enough to do with all its Aſſiſtance, to keep me from diſcovering more Weakneſs to the Earl, than he had ſhew'd Paſſion for his Miſtreſs. But his Tranſport was ſo great, that it hinder'd him from perceiving mine; ſo that he was ignorant of the Wound he had given me: But making my Grief give place to my Glory, I diſſembled my ſelf ſerene and unconcern'd, notwithſtanding I labour'd under all the Confuſion and Trouble imaginable: And therefore, putting on all the Aſſurance I was capable of, I reply to him, *You have made a good Choice; and the Counteſs of* Rutland *deſerves the Kindneſs you profeſs for her. Madam,* reply'd he, with an Air of Complaiſance in his Looks, which added to my Grief, *You have done more for me, in approving of my Paſſion for the Counteſs of* Rutland, *than*

you cou'd have done, had you procur'd me the Empire of the Universe. It is your Desire then, added I, with a Sigh that proceeded from Despair, *that I shou'd give her to you? I desire any thing*, said he, *that may preserve me from dying for Love of her. Go your way then*, (said I, to be rid of him, and that I might ease my self of the insupportable Constraint I labour'd under) *Be assur'd I will concern my self in your Amour; in time you will know it. But take heed you give not the Earl of* Leicester *the least Intimation of the Secret I have imparted only to you. Not before I have order from your Majesty* (answer'd he) *to congratulate his Happiness, and pay him the Devoirs of an affectionate Subject.*

These last Words he pronounc'd with such an Air of Satisfaction, as wou'd have made you for ever have abhorr'd him, for his Ingratitude: For my Condition was now become so altogether desperate, that I found it extreamly difficult to re-assume the Use of that Reason which I had almost lost in the Intanglement of Jealousie, Love and Anger. But it was but just upon me: My self being the Author of my own Misfortunes; in calling the Countess of *Rutland* to Court after the Death of her Husband. When I ought to have consider'd, that the Splendor of her Beauty added to the Charms of her Youth, not being then any more than sixteen Years old, were sufficient to carry away the Prize of Love from all Competitors. Yet I never took notice of any particular Regard the Earl of *Essex* had for her, above the other Ladies of the Court, he making Visits to her, no more than unto them. But their Amour was mysteriously manag'd, and the Secrecy added to the Strength of it. The Trouble I was in, when Anger, instead of Grief, had the possession of my Heart, is unexpressible: I cou'd not forgive his slighting me, as he did, tho' Respect and Duty might before have kept him from the knowledge of his good Fortune. So that now both his Treachery and Ingratitude was manifest. But, think, Madam, what an Aggravation it was, to find him so far from apprehending my Meaning, that he went immediately to carry my Rival the glad Tydings of his Success with me, and likewise new Tenders of his Love. This very Thought made me resolve to delay what I cou'd not hinder: and so went out of my Closet into the Chamber to call him back: But I thought I heard the Earl of *Leicester*'s Voice, and his in the Anti-Chamber, and going to the Door, found it was what I thought. For no doubt but *Leicester*'s Jealousie had set him on the Watch, having it seems seen *Essex* to enter my Chamber. And when he saw him return with so pleasant a Countenance, *You are happy* (said he) *in having the Priviledge of Entertaining the Queen as long as you please; when others who wou'd Court that Happiness with at least an equal Ardour, can't obtain that Blessing for a Moment. I doubt not*, replied *Essex*, *but you better deserve it; and I believe you will find more Pleasure in it. I will leave you at liberty to go in search of it; and you will do me a Kindness not to hinder me now,*

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being call'd another Way on a very important Occaſion. And ſo left him, and went to his Miſtreſs. This freſh Provocation brought me into ſo much Confuſion, that I became almoſt as ſenſleſs, as if I'd been transform'd into a Statue. But by degrees re-aſſuming my Reaſon, my Diſcretion prevail'd over my Weakneſs: My Anger, I confeſs, began to grow hot againſt the Counteſs of *Rutland*, but this Conſideration allay'd it, That 'twas her Beauty was her only Crime; and that ſhe was ignorant of any Concern that I had for her Adorer. The Earl of *Leiceſter* came into my Preſence ſoon after, but perceiving me in ſome Diſorder, and not daring to take notice of it, after a ſhort ſtay, he withdrew.

Not long before, I had ſent to Congratulate the King of *Navar* on his Acceſſion to the Crown of *France*; and being inform'd, that he wanted ſome Aſſiſtance, I reſolv'd to ſupply him with ſome Forces, and ſend them under the Command of the Earl of *Eſſex*, hoping that his abſence might work a Cure upon me. But tho' I flatter'd my ſelf at firſt, that the reaſon why I wou'd remove him, was the deſire I had to forget him; yet, to be ingenious in the Matter, I found it was rather a ſecret deſire of Revenge, by removing him out of the ſight of a Rival that was ſo dear to him. The Matter being thus reſolv'd on, I haſten'd their being got ready; with all imaginable ſpeed I ſent for the Earl of *Eſſex* to attend me. To whom I deliver'd my Mind in this manner: *I know you love Honour, and therefore believe you will not prefer the Pleaſure of Sighing before your Miſtreſs, to the Opportunities of acquiring Glory: And ſuch an Occaſion now offers; for I am reſolv'd you ſhall command the Troops I am ſending to the French King's Aſſiſtance. And to fortifie your ſelf againſt the Troubles of Abſence, think of the Pleaſures your Return will yield you.* To which he reply'd in a languiſhing Tone, which was uſher'd in with a Sigh, *How great a Paſſion ſoever I have for my Miſtreſs, I ſhall prefer the Honour of obeying your Commands before it.*

Soon after the Counteſs of *Rutland* (whom ſince I knew to be my Rival, I cou'd ſcarce bear the ſight of) deſir'd my Permiſſion to retire a conſiderable Diſtance from *London*; to which I very readily conſented; after ſhe had had the Mortification of ſeeing the Earl take his Leave of me.

I need not ſpeak of what follow'd his going into *France*, for all *Europe* ſoon rung with the Fame of his great Actions; and I cannot ſay, but that I was well enough pleas'd to hear him commended: I might well enough have recall'd him as ſoon as *France* was at quiet. But not being deſir'd by him to do it, I order'd him to joyn Admiral *Howard*, whom I had then ſent for *Spain*: And that I might not diminiſh his Honour, I gave him the like Commiſſion for this Expedition, as I did for that of *France*. And as he had before in that Kingdom, ſo now he did Wonders in *Spain*,

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and by his ſingle Valour frighted the Enemies. In brief, after he had taken *Cales*, and pillag'd the Coaſt of *Portugal*, he put to Sea again, in order to return for *England*: But the Fleet was diſperſed by a dreadful Storm, inſomuch that we had News that the Earl of *Eſſex* was loſt: And then it was that I became more ſenſible than ever of the Regard I had for him; and I cou'd not forbear accuſing the Sea for having reveng'd the Indifference he had for me, in too ſevere a manner. And it is impoſſible to ſay what I ſuffer'd for him, whilſt I apprehended him loſt; when News was brought me, that by the Aſſiſtance of the Admiral of *Holland* he was arrived at *Plimouth*; from whence in a very ſhort time he came to Court.

But tho' I had ſo immoderately griev'd at his ſuppoſed Death, and was tranſported with a thouſand Joys at the News of his being alive, and was extreamly pleas'd with the Report of his being come to Town, yet the Thoughts of my ſeeing him ſighing for another, fill'd me with ſo much Jealouſie, that I had once reſolv'd to order him to give the Council an Account of his Conduct, and not to admit him into my Preſence. But when I was about to put my Reſolves in Execution, the Tenderneſs I had for him, made all my Reſolutions flag, and I was forc'd to follow my Inclinations, and ſee the moſt formidable Enemy of my Repoſe. And when I admitted him into my Preſence, (maugre all the Coldneſs I intended to entertain him with) he ſaw nothing but Kindneſs and Complaiſance in all my Actions.

But you will wonder to hear how agreeably I was ſurpriz'd to find that his Abſence had wean'd his Affection from the Counteſs of *Rutland*: For he was now no longer the ſame languiſhing melancholy Man I had obſerv'd him to be before his Departure: He had the Air of an intire Satisfaction in his Looks, and all his Actions brisk and gay. And I cou'd not but think there were as many Smiles in his Face (tho' the Counteſs of *Rutland* was abſent) as I found Joy in my Heart, at the Explication he made: *I ſee you again* (ſaid I to him) *return'd with Victory; but 'tis now not in my Power to reward your laſt Services with a ſight of the Counteſs of* Rutland. *But if any thing I can do, can comfort you——I am eaſily comforted for her Abſence*, (anſwer'd he very briskly) *when I am permitted to ſee your Majeſty: I have no Paſſion now, but for the Glory of ſerving your Majeſty; and the Counteſs of* Rutland *is now no more than other Ladies of the Court. Are you no longer in Love with the Counteſs of* Rutland? (replied I between Hope and Fear) *You have ſpoken too faſt. When you ſee her again.—— I ſee her again* (ſaid he, interrupting me) *it ſhall be without thoſe Tranſports I expreſt for her; not forgetting the Reſpects due to your Majeſty— What*, replied I, *are you not afraid of the Reproaches of a provoked Miſtreſs? No, Madam*, (ſaid he, with an Air of perfect Freedom) *I am only concern'd to do my Duty, and approve myſelf worthy of your Majeſty's Favours.— This*, anſwer'd I, *deſerves my Acknowledgments, and Time ſhall let you ſee, I am not ungrateful,*

After all this, I appeal to you, Madam, whether I had not Reason to believe he was cured of his first Passion; which left me not without some flattering Hopes, that time might make him entertain some Kindness for myself: And no wonder I comply'd with his Desires so far, as to permit him about a Week after to go into the Country about his own private Affairs, from whence in about ten Days, he return'd again, without so much as any Symptom of his former Passion.

In this State things remain'd till the Earl of *Tyrone* had rais'd such a Rebellion in *Ireland*, as made it necessary to send fresh Forces over thither, to subdue them: And seeing the Earl of *Essex* under a Necessity of going thither, I could by no means omit to let him know, that the Kingdom was at his Command: And here I must confess my Weakness, in making such a Declaration of my Love. And to let you see that I will hide nothing from you, I will here give you an Account of what at that time pass'd between us.

Upon the News of the Troubles in *Ireland*, he came and threw himself at my Feet, and begg'd that the Quieting of that Disturbance might be his Province. *You have done enough already*, said I, *and there's no Occasion you shou'd, by exposing yourself to new Dangers, oblige me to new Acknowledgments.* — *I believe, Madam*, said he, *that the Favour I beg, will be envy'd me: But I take the Boldness to say, Your Majesty cannot refuse it me, without being injurious to yourself; since it may contribute to my Meriting the Favour you have already honoured me with* — *The Zeal you express for undertaking great Actions*, reply'd I, *may not possibly be so pleasing as you imagine: And all the Advantages that may redound to* England *thro' your Valour, is less considerable than the Trouble it occasions me, who had rather hazard my Crown, than endanger your Life. I am ambitious, yet* --- *Ah! my Lord, save me the Confusion of a more particular Explication, of what you might easily have long since understood. I might perhaps presume too far in my Wishes*, says the Earl in some Disorder. *Wish boldly*, answer'd I, *I love; and if I blush to tell you so, 'tis not that I am either ashamed or repent of it. You may believe this a very hard Task for a Person of my Humour, who have seen you sigh for another, when at the same time I have slighted Kings for your sake, and would have sacrific'd more to your Satisfaction* — *What, Madam* (cry'd he, like a Man astonish'd) *Have you lov'd me! And I been so unfortunate to make myself unworthy of your Kindness by those Sighs I did discover? Did my Eyes never tell you what I look'd for in yours?* said I. *I never had the Boldness*, answered he, *to make a Construction of your Looks. Your Fear was the Effect of Indifference*, said I; *but no more of what's past: Tell me now, Can you love me? Rather ask me, Madam*, (answers he) *if all the Affection of my Soul can merit your Love? and whether the Earl of* Leicester *(whom you design to make the happiest Man upon Earth) shall not carry the Day from me? The Earl of* Leicester, (said I) *was but a Pretence to make you speak: I told you then truly, the Thoughts I had of you: My Trouble for you was not small, both in your*

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Abſence, and ſince your Return: But all is forgotten. Be henceforth as I wiſh, and doubt not of being happy. — He ſeem'd to be diſorder'd at what I had ſaid, which I imputed as an effect of his ſurprizing Joy; I now thought it time to be no longer ſcrupulous, for I had now gone ſo far that there was no retreating: And therefore added I, *I will no longer keep you under any Uncertainty; but to convince you of the Truth of what I have ſpoken, Take this,* (ſaid I, delivering him a Ring, as the high Aſſurance of my Favour) *keep it as a Pledge of my Kindneſs, which I conjure you to preſerve in the State it is in: And on that Condition, I promiſe you never to deny you any thing you deſire of me, when you ſhew me this Ring, tho' it coſt me my Life and my Fortune.*

At the receiving of this Ring, his Acknowledgments were ſuitable to ſo great a Favour; nor was he wanting in his Promiſes of as high a Nature. — But in a few Days after, he went for *Ireland*; and left me in the greateſt Aſſurances that his Paſſion was equal to mine. But he had not been long there, and was hardly got up to the Rebels, but he was repreſented to me as one of the greateſt Traytors to my Crown and Dignity, and charg'd with ſuch Crimes, that I could not withſtand his Impriſonment, nor that of his Friend, the Earl of *Southampton*'s.

You may ſave me the Labour, Madam, of telling you the reſt: His obſtinate Reſiſtance, his want of Reſpect for my Orders, his impriſoning my Miniſters, his murthering my Soldiers, and the intolerable Pride with which all this was done, is but too well known.

Here the Queen ended her Diſcourſe; but this Recapitulation of what had paſs'd between her and *Eſſex*, having reviv'd the Memory of her paſt Amours, wou'd not ſuffer her to put an end to her Troubles: Nor was the Counteſs of *Nottingham* without her Concern in this Matter; for ſhe, as well as the Queen had entertain'd a fruitleſs Paſſion for *Eſſex*, and had employ'd all the Art ſhe was capable of, in raiſing in him the like Flame: And having now underſtood for what Reaſon ſhe was ſlighted by him, it alſo increas'd her Reſentments. And therefore all the Return that ſhe made to what the Queen had told her, was to expreſs a Zeal to her Service, and to perſwade her from having any farther Kindneſs for the Earl upon whoſe Ruin ſhe was wholly bent; as the Return ſhe thought he merited, for not anſwering the Paſſion ſhe had formerly had for him.

But tho' the Earl could not anſwer the Counteſs's Deſire, no more than he had done the Queen's, yet the Counteſs had another Admirer, Secretary *Cecil*, who in the midſt of his Gravity diſcover'd ſome Charms in the Counteſs of *Nottingham*, that created in him a ſtrong Paſſion for her; and this Paſſion was increas'd in both, by the natural Hatred they had profeſt againſt the Earl of *Eſſex*, tho' from different Cauſes: *Cecil*, becauſe he look'd upon the Earl as the Obſtacle of his ambitious Pretenſions; and the Counteſs from that Rage and Averſion that generally reſults from that Love that's anſwer'd with Neglect. They both rejoyced in the Earl

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of *Eſſex*'s Misfortunes, butwere both concern'd at the Queen'sſtill favourable Inclinations for him.

For when the Counteſs had taken leave of the Queen, ſhe preſently repairs to *Cecil*, and acquaints him with all that had paſs'd; and there they concerted the Meaſures that were to be taken for the Earl's Deſtruction. The firſt Step whereunto, was *Cecil*'s preſſing the Queen to bring *Eſſex* to a Trial; and at the ſame time caus'd the News of his Death to be ſpread throughout the Kingdom.

In the mean time the unfortunate *Eſſex*, was not without having his Thoughts exercis'd about his own Affairs; nor was it ſo much his Life he was ſollicitous about: He knew that he was belov'd of the Queen, and knew that it was not in his power to make her reciprocal returns: He alſo knew as well he had deceiv'd her, and that ſhe might not only juſtly Reproach him, but make him Sacrifice to her ſevereſt Sentiments.

As for the Queen, notwithſtanding all the black Charges againſt *Eſſex*, ſhe had ſtill ſuch a ſecret Inclination for him, that ſhe had neither the Power nor the Will to give him up to his ill Fortune, without at leaſt having heard him herſelf: To which end ſhe took up a Reſolution to go to his Houſe, (where he was under Confinement) there to reproach him as he deſerv'd; or elſe (which ſhe much rather deſir'd) to find him innocent.

In paying this Viſit, the Queen took that Care, that no Notice was taken of the Undecency of it; and was by her Confidents, privately introduc'd alone into the Chamber of the beloved Criminal.

The Earl was ſurpriz'd at the Queen's coming in, and Queen felt no ſmall emotion in her ſelf at the ſeeing him there as a Priſoner: But the Earl recovering himſelf, ſaluted her with a profound Reſpect; and then ſo ſteadily fixed his Eyes on her, that in ſpight of all her Reſolutions, ſhe could not forbear ſhedding ſome Tears: Which as ſhe was drying up, *Well, my Lord*, ſaid ſhe, *you ſee what I do for you, notwithſtanding all the Crimes with which I can reproach you. I come to hear what you have to ſay in your Juſtification; which I have lov'd you too well, not to deſire you may be able to make it out. And wou'd Heaven were pleas'd it might be purchas'd with any the moſt precious thing in my Power.* — *Madam*, reply'd the Earl, ſighing, *My greateſt Crime is, that I thought myſelf too happy.* *Had you ſat down there*, ſaid the Queen, *I ſhould have been too well pleas'd, to have complain'd of you. But was it ſo eſſential to your Happineſs, that you muſt deſtroy me to make you ſelf ſo? Or what need was there of your having Recourſe to violent Means, to make your ſelf happy of a Fortune, which I was willing to beſtow upon you, and to ſhare with you in? What Reaſon cou'd you have, to ſeek the Protection of the Kings of* Scotland *and* Spain? *Did any Intereſt oblige you to a ſecret Correſpondence with* Tyrone? *And was it for the Safety of my Perſon, you deſign'd to make me your Slave and his? All you have done ſince to my Subjects againſt my Orders, are thoſe the Expreſſions of your Reſpect? Is it by Fury and Treaſon you ſhew your*

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Zeal for me and the Publick? Or, is all we have ſeen and heard of you but Illuſion and Fancy? Yes, Madam, reply'd the Earl, *thoſe Accuſations of Treaſons and ill Deſigns, it was, that run me upon the Reſiſtance I have made. You have been pleas'd to heap Favours upon me; and I (too proud of what I ſo little deſerved) flatter'd my ſelf with Expectation of a thouſand Pleaſures, which you had not abſolutely forbid me to hope for. This let looſe the Envy and Jealouſie of others, againſt my good Fortune. They abus'd your Majeſty with Miſ-informations: And I had the Fortune to be aſſur'd, that your Majeſty had order'd me to be Arreſted, tho' my Innocence wou'd have perſwaded me to the contrary. I confeſs, Madam, I was in a Rage to ſee my Enemies inſult over me, and my ſelf abandon'd by your Majeſty, and on the Point of ſuffering perhaps a ſhameful Death. I thought it neither for my Reputation, nor your Majeſty's Honour, that I ſhould die as a Criminal. This put me upon having Recourſe to thoſe Succours and Aſſiſtances they reproach me with: And the Reſolution I took to go out of* England, *in hopes to confound my Accuſers. But I found all the Paſſages ſtopt; and muſt acknowledge, in that deſperate Condition, I vented my Fury, by ſeeking Revenge on your Miniſters. They, Madam, and only they, were the Objects of the Rebellion I am charged with.*

The Earl ſaid many other Things to this purpoſe, which it wou'd take up too much room to inſert here. Let it ſuffice, that by his Paſſionate Diſcourſes, he work'd the Queen into ſo good Opinion of him, that ſhe told him, ſhe would cauſe a Council to be call'd on purpoſe within two Days time, wherein ſhe would declare him innocent, and reſtore him to his former Imployments: Leaving *Eſſex*, and going away very well ſatisfied, with what had paſs'd between 'em. The Queen was fully reſolv'd upon what ſhe had promis'd *Eſſex*, and the next Morning ſent for *Cecil*, the Counteſs of *Nottingham* at the ſame time waiting on her; to whom ſhe imparted her Reſolution, and order'd *Cecil* to ſummon a Council to that end, aſſuring them ſhe had inconteſtible Reaſons for ſo doing. This made *Cecil* and the Counteſs look one upon another, as Perſons whoſe Projects for the Earl's Deſtruction were now abortive, and all their Hopes were giving up the Ghoſt: They ſaw the Queen was inflexible in her Reſolutions; and tho' both *Cecil* and the Counteſs had ſpoke to the Queen to divert her from her Reſolution, yet they ſaw 'twas to no purpoſe; and *Cecil* was forc'd to order an extraordinary Call of the Council.

The End of the Firſt Part.

THE

THE History of Queen *ELIZABETH*, AND HER *Great Favourite the Earl of* Eſſex, *&c.*

The Second Part.

WE left the Earl of *Eſſex* his Affairs in a very promiſing Condition: The Queen was reconcil'd to him, and had promis'd before two Days were paſt, to declare him innocent, and to reſtore him to all his Honours and Commands: And Secretary *Cecil* (to his great Mortification) was conſtrained to order an extraordinary Call of the Council to that end. But, alas! ſuch is the Viciſſitude of all humane Things, that oftentimes ſome intervening Accident or other, ſoon renders all our faireſt Hopes abortive: And when we have the cleareſt Views of an approaching Happineſs, ſome unforeſeen Event does in a Moment plunge us into the deep Abyſs of irretrievable Miſery. And ſo it happen'd with the Earl of *Eſſex*; for when his Enemies thought his good Fortune was on the very Point of being reconcil'd to him, that fickle Goddeſs on a ſudden declar'd for his Enemies, and crown'd all their Deſigns for his Deſtruction, with an unexpected Succeſs.

For as the Queen was going to the Council, in order to declare the Earl of *Eſſex* innocent, word was brought her, that the Counteſs of *Rutland* deſir'd to wait upon her. The Queen, remembring what was paſt, cou'd not hear her Name without bluſhing; and thinking it not a proper Seaſon, andwithal ſome what unlucky, was about to put off the Counteſs to another time: But ſhe having not us'd to deny Acceſs to any, and knowing the Counteſs of *Rutland* was a Lady of the firſt Rank, both for Honour and Eſtate, ſhe commanded ſhe ſhou'd be admitted: Whereupon the Counteſs preſently came in; and, tho' her Dreſs was careleſs, her Looks were melancholy, and her Eyes were languiſhing; yet her Beauty was moving and conſpicuous in the midſt of all: As ſoon as ſhe came in, ſhe threw herſelf at the Queen's Feet, and with a Tone that denoted the Extremity of her Grief, *Madam*, ſaid ſhe, *I am a humble Petitioner to implore your Majeſty's Compaſſion for the unfortunate Earl of* Eſſex. *For the Earl of* Eſſx, *Madam!* (anſwer'd the Queen, with ſome Surprize) *How came you concern'd for him, who hath quitted you with ſo much Indifference, after ſo many*

many Promiſes of extraordinary Kindneſs? I expected you were rather come to joyn your Reſentments with mine, that you might thereby revenge the Injury done to your Beauty. No Madam (reply'd the Counteſs) *It's not the Tranſports of a forſaken Miſtreſs, that has brought me into your Majeſty's Preſence; but the tender Affection due from a Virtuous Wife to a Husband that ſhe dearly loves: In begging for the Earl of* Eſſex, *I beg for mine: This Confeſſion may perhaps aggravate our Guilt; but it is no time for them to dally, who are on the Bank of a Precipice. I own, Madam, that after a thouſand Croſſes, we had that tender Kindneſs for each other, that we married privately, contrary to that Reſpect due from us to your Majeſty: This, Madam, and this only with his fear of your juſt Indignation, put the Earl of* Eſſex *upon ſeeking Refuge out of your Dominions: He thought it fit I ſhould go out of them, but never entertain'd a Thought of conſpiring againſt your Majeſty: However, this has ruin'd us; and if you protect not an unfortunate Perſon, whom you have ſo much honour'd, he is irrecoverably loſt. Conſider, I beſeech you, Madam, That a few Drops of Blood at your Diſpoſe, and a poor Life you are Miſtreſs of, are not a ſuitable Revenge to the Grandeur of a Queen ador'd for many Vertues, but moſt of all for her Clemency.*

The Queen was ſtruck with ſo great a Surprize at the beginning of this Diſcourſe, that the Counteſs met with no Interruption in what ſhe had a Mind to ſay: But, O what a Heart-rending Piece of News was this, to one that had promis'd herſelf all the Satisfaction that a pleaſing Reconciliation with the Man ſhe lov'd, cou'd afford her! What Grief and Anger muſt ſuch a Diſappointment raiſe; eſpecially in a Soveraign Queen, paſſionately in Love, and naturally haughty and high-ſpirited, to ſee herſelf thus barbarouſly betray'd? And not to find it out till the very Moment that ſhe was going to advance him to the higheſt Pinacle of Honour, thro' an over-fond and blind Credulity! Yet was ſhe unwilling the Counteſs ſhould know any thing of her Grief; and therefore fixing her Eyes upon her, with a Countenance full of Anger and Severity, *The Life you beg of me,* ſaid ſhe, *is not in my Power: The Peers are his Judges.* — *Ah, Madam,* (ſaid the ſorrowful Counteſs) *My Husband is loſt if you give him up to their Fury; their Jealouſie will do what Juſtice cannot.* — *Why ſhould you tremble your ſelf,* ſaid the Queen, *if he be not guilty?* — *Tho' I am very ſure he is innocent,* reply'd the Counteſs, *yet your cruel Miniſters are not diſpos'd to believe it. Let me intreat you, Madam, if your Majeſty will grant me no more, to be put into the ſame Priſon with him. I am as criminal as he, and perhaps more.* — *I wiſh it were in my Power to grant your Deſires,* ſaid the Queen, *but common Policy forbids it; You may, if you pleaſe, wait his Fate and your own in a Chamber in this Palace.* — *Ah, Madam! the laſt Favour I beg of you* (ſaid the Counteſs) *is, That I may be put into Irons; and what can you fear from a Grief without Power?* — *I fear being troubled with it; and I will be obey'd,* anſwer'd the Queen, in a tranſport of Anger, and ſo left her; giving Order for her being put under Guards in a Chamber.

It was eaſie to ſee that the Fury of the Queen, by ſeeing herſelf deceived by him, who had the chief Aſcendant in her Soul, was heighten'd to a degree of Madneſs; All her Tenderneſs was now forgotten, and Revenge, and giving him up to to the Severity of Juſtice, now took up all her Thoughts: *Death*, cry'd ſhe, but to herſelf, *ſhall be the Reward of his Ingratitude; and I will make his Puniſhment an Example to the whole World.*

With this Reſolution, ſhe came to the Council: When, ſhe had declared her ſelf, the Peers were nam'd for trying the Earls of *Eſſex* and *Southampton*. Yet in this exerting of her Juſtice, ſhe could not forbear mixing ſome amorous Sighs, and the Agitation of her Soul, was ſufficiently diſcernable: For ſhe withdrew from the Council under very great Trouble, and would admit of none into her Preſence for ſeveral Days after.

Cecil was ſtrangely ſurpriz'd to hear the Queen declare herſelf againſt *Eſſex*, whom he verily believ'd ſhe was reſolved to pardon: And tho' he knew not the occaſion of this Change, he cou'd not conceal the Satisfaction he took in it, but forthwith repairs to the Counteſs of *Nottingham*, and made her a Partaker of the ſame Joy: Yet could they think it not compleat, while *Eſſex* was only a Priſoner in his own Houſe: And therefore reſolv'd to ſtrike while the Iron was hot, and get an Order from the Queen for putting him in the Tower of *London*; which as it was then eaſily obtain'd, was as ſpeedily executed.

The Earl, who according to the Queen's Promiſe expected to have been ſet at Liberty, not knowing any thing that had paſs'd, was ſtrangely ſurpriz'd to find himſelf under a ſtraiter Confinement; and therefore prepar'd for the worſt that might happen; reſolving to bear his Misfortunes with that Reſolution and Fortitude that had always accompanied him. The Counteſs his Lady having no Comfort but her Tears, nor Company but her diſmal Apprehenſions, endeavour'd from the Compaſſion of her Guards to learn ſomewhat of her Husband's Condition; and by them ſhe was told that his Judges were appointed, and that he was remov'd to the Tower: Upon this ſhe ſolicited her Guards, by the powerful Charms of Gold, to bring her to a ſight of her Husband; proteſting ſhe neither deſign'd her own Liberty nor her Husband's, but only a few Minutes of private Diſcourſe with him; which thro' the irreſiſtable Operation of that Sovereign Metal, they both undertook and effected, by the help of their Companions in the Tower.

The unfortunate Earl (that knew nothing of what happen'd at *Whitehall*) being told he was in a few Days to appear before his Judges, expected the end of his Misfortunes with a Conſtancy worthy of him; and in the midſt of his Afflictions comforted himſelf with this, that his Counteſs being retir'd into *Scotland*, was out of Danger; and therefore was the more ſurpriz'd to ſee her there: *Ah, Madam*, ſaid he, *How am I diſappointed in the chiefeſt of my Hopes! I little thought to ſee you in this fatal Place; who in the*

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Name of Wonder, had Power to bring you hither? My Grief and my Guards have brought me hither, reply'd the Counteſs. *Your Guards! What Madam, are you the Queen's Priſoner?* ſaid the Earl. *Yes,* ſaid ſhe, *and the Queen is ſo angry we are paſt Hope. I was, as you deſir'd me, retiring to a Place of Safety, but the News of your Death put a Stop to my Journey; for tho' it was not in my Power to deliver you out of your Troubles, yet I thought it my Duty to ſhare them with you. This made me preſent myſelf to the Queen, and ſeek to move her Compaſſion; but alas! ſhe's inexorable. Ah, Madam,* ſaid the Earl, *you have ruin'd us beyond retrieving: But had not you appear'd, I had been now at Liberty; for by a dexterous Management, I had regain'd the Queen's Favour; but now ſhe knows I am married, there remains no more Hopes.* 'Tis impoſſible to deſcribe the Affliction the Counteſs was in, at theſe Words; ſhe lamented the Sin of her Ignorance in the moſt pathetick Terms imaginable: And after having ſtriv'd to out-rival one another in their Tenderneſs for each other, they were parted by their Guards, amidſt thoſe melting Tears that would have mov'd a Heart of Marble.

Soon after this, follow'd the Tryals of the Earls of *Eſſex* and *Southampton*; but the Queen did not, as it was believ'd ſhe wou'd, comprehend the Counteſs of *Eſſex* in her Husband's Impeachment. It will not ſuit with our intended Brevity, to relate the Tryal at large. But in ſhort, the Priſoners were charg'd with holding a Criminal Correſpondence with the Kings of *Scotland* and *Spain*; that they had ſecret Allyance with *Tyrone*, and laid a Plot againſt the Queen's Authority: To which the Earls made a very ſtout and reſolute Defence. *Cecil*, tho' a politick Man, diſcover'd too much the Malignity of his Intentions, and ſhew'd himſelf not only a ſevere Judge, but a moſt inveterate Enemy; *Eſſex* ſaw well enough his Animoſity, but anſwer'd it with a reſolute Slight, and an undaunted Conſtancy: Yet for all the brave Defence he made, he was condemned with the Formalities uſed on ſuch Occaſions; and Sentence of Death paſſed upon them, which was pronounced by the Lord High-ſteward. The Earl of *Eſſex* was not at all moved for himſelf, but was very much concern'd for the Earl of *Southampton*, only for his Love to him, was brought under the ſame Condemnation, and interceeded to the Judges on his behalf with the greateſt Tenderneſs.

When the Queen underſtood what had paſs'd, ſhe gave ſecret Orders to defer their Execution; finding it very difficult to raiſe Diſpleaſure to an even Pitch with her Tenderneſs. And *Cecil* then trembled to find the Sentence he had heard pronounced with ſo much Pleaſure, delay'd by the Queen's Pity: Nor was the Counteſs of *Nottingham*'s Trouble leſs on that Account.

The Queen being ſenſible that 'twas only the long Friendſhip the Earl of *Southampton* had for *Eſſex*, was his greateſt Crime; and that the Proofs againſt him were but ſlight, granted him his Pardon at his Friends De-

fire: The News of which being brought to the Earl of *Essex*; he, like a brave and generous Soul, sincerely protested, *That now he should dye with Satisfaction and Content, since the Queen by her Pardon had own'd* Southampton's *Innocence.*

But while the Earl of *Essex* with an undaunted Constancy, expected the Catastrophe of his Tragedy, his Countess was inform'd that he was executed; which filled her with so great Sorrow, that the whole Court was filled with her Lamentations; of which the Queen herself was not ignorant, tho' she was unconcern'd: *Let her cry*, said she to the Countess of *Nottingham*, *she must shed many more to wipe out the Score of those Tears she hath cost me.* The Countess was well enough pleas'd at what the Queen said, and strove more to irritate, than allay her Anger: Which that she might the better keep up, she made a hypocritical Visit to the Countess of *Essex*, not to condole her unfortunate Circumstances, but rather to render her more miserable: For tho' she found her in so deplorable a Condition, that she fell every Minute into the Arms of the Women about her for very Weakness, and recover'd herself only to lament the more pitifully, yet the Countess of *Nottingham* beheld all with so much Unconcernedness as shewed the Hardness of her Heart. However, that she might find out the Mysteries of their Love, she urged the Countess to make a Relation of it; which she did at large; by which the cruel Countess irritated the Anger of the Queen so much the more against the Earl of *Essex*; but there was one thing that troubled the Countess of *Nottingham* extreamly, which she had first heard from the Queen, and afterwards confirmed by the Countess of *Essex*, and that was, that the Earl had a Ring from the Queen, which whenever he sent to her she promised to deliver him. This Secret she imparted to *Cecil*, to whom also it gave a terrible Disturbance; for while he kept that, they looked upon the Earl as the Master of his own Fortunes. And therefore they both resolved to watch the Earl so narrowly that he should give it to none to deliver it to the Queen, without their Knowledge; and so to corrupt the Person that was to carry it to the Queen, that it should never be given to her.

The Plot being thus laid betwixt them, the Countess of *Nottingham* goes to the Queen to incense her what she could against *Essex*, tells her all she had heard from his Countess; and then aggravates all against him; puts the Queen in mind of his plotting against her Authority, his great Hypocrisie, in pretending to be cur'd of his Passion for the Countess of *Rutland*, when he had privately married her; his giving himself wholly up to the Pleasures of it, while he pretended to be entirely at her Devotion; and his Pride in not submitting himself to her, in the greatest calamity, and under the hourly expectation of Death. These things the Countess pressed so warmly, that the Queen thought herself so absolute a Mistress of her Resolutions, that she doubted not but she could see him

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die. And yet she no sooner thought so, but the pleasing Idea of the Earl, his eminent Services, his great Merit, but especially the natural Inclination she had for him, would presently inspire her with more gentle Resolutions. Thus the Countess left the Queen to her own restless and uneasie Thoughts until the Morning. And if the Queen had but little rest that Night, the Countess of *Nottingham* had not much more: Both were alike restless, but for different Reasons; the one agitated by Love, the other by Revenge.

In the Morning following, the Countess, as she used to do, waited on the Queen, You find me, *said the Queen*, in a lamentable Condition, and without you can apply some better Cordials to me, I shall scarce endure it much longer. The Wretch to whom I owe all that I suffer, is continually in my Mind, which has fram'd the most pitiful Idea of his present Condition imaginable: And shall I do nothing for him in such an Extreamity? Shall I suffer him to perish, as if I had no more Regard for him than another, when I have declar'd to him I lov'd him? Will it not be an eternal Reproach to me to have forsaken him, when it was in my Power to have sav'd him? — Whatever your Majesty shall please to do in his Favour, *answered the Countess of* Nottingham, will be the effect of your pure Generosity, since he hath not in the least solicited any Favour from you. Indeed if he petition'd, your Bounty would then be look'd upon as an effect of your Commiseration, and of his Submission; but now it will proceed purely from your own Goodness. These Words touch'd the Queen in her most tender Part; and affected what the revengeful Countess aim'd at, which was to set the Queen against him. So that the Queen having blush'd and continu'd silent for a little while, began again thus: I must own to all for this ungratoful Man, without putting him to the cost of one Sign of Repentance, is to approve his Pride; I see he would have my Kindness do all, and without any Reflections on the Outrages he heth done me, believes I think myself sufficiently recompenced in holding the Executioner's Hand. No doubt, *said the Countess*, but he will triumph over that Goodness your Majesty always made appear to him. Had he been carry'd from the Bar to the Scaffold, had you given him a Sight of that Scene of Death, and pardon'd *Southampton*, without respiting the other's Execution, he would have been glad to have petition'd for Mercy: But he knows the Power he has over you: and pretends that by receiving a Pardon he vouchsafes not to petition for, the World will believe him innocent. But, Madam, if things be carried on thus, what will be thought of the Justice of the Kingdom? What will the World judge of your Majesty? And if the *Earl of Essex* without ackdowledging his Crimes sees himself at Liberty, will it not be said, That the Queen of *England* is not so discreet as Fame reports her.

It was at this unhappy Juncture that *Cecil* came to wait upon the Queen,

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and corroborated all that the Countess of *Nottingham* had spoken, making use of all the Eloquence he was Master of, to let the Queen know she was concern'd to order the Earl of *Essex*'s Execution: insomuch that the Queen in a Pet, consented that he should be executed suddenly. And *Cecil* to be sure would lose no time in carrying her Orders to those that were to be the fatal Executors of it.

The Earl of *Essex* had not indeed hitherto petition'd for a Favour which he thought the Queen's Goodness would of itself have bestowed upon him. But when he beheld himself at the Point of being carried to the Scaffold, he resolv'd to implore her Mercy; and to put her in mind of her Promises and Oaths. And tho' he knew the Countess of *Nottingham* had no great Kindness for him; yet he knew also she was the *Queen*'s Favourite and Confident, and believ'd she retain'd Generosity enough to oblige him in this important Mediation; and therefore sent to desire the Favour of a Visit from her. The Countess uneasie till she knew the Cause of his Request, went immedihtely to him without acquainting the Queen. To whom the Earl address'd himself thus:

Can you, Madam, pardon the most unfortunate Man in the World, the Trouble he gives you at a Time when he has no Cause to flatter himself you have any Remains of Kindness for him? Yet nothing can now be of greater Advantage to me than your Protection. I am not ignorant of the Power you have over the Queen; and would you be pleas'd to joyn it to my repentant Sorrow for having offended her, I doubt not but we may prevail much: Tell her then, Madam, continu'd the Earl, putting his Knee to the Ground, that you have seen me in this suppliant Posture, full of Grief, for having deserved her Hatred. Restore her this R I N G *which I have kept, and intreat her to remember her the Promises she made, when she gave it me. I beg my Life by this Pledge, and she cannot deny me, without forgetting her Oaths. I can no longer look upon my Life as a thing pleasing to me; but a miserable Wife and the Interest of a Son, press me to continue it as long as I can. I cannot think the Innocency of the one, or Infancy of the other, needs my Justication. The Favour to be begg'd of the Queen is for me alone.*

It is not easie to imagine with what Transports of Joy she beheld the *Earl*, when he trusted her with that Ring, the Power whereof she had so much dreaded, and which *Cecil* also was so much afraid of. And therefore she made no Scruple to promise the *Earl* what great things she would do on this Occasion for him, tho' she never in the least intended it; assuring him she would go directly to the Queen, and use her utmost Power with her in his Favour.

Having left the Earl, the cruel Woman, instead of going to the *Queen*, went directly to *Cecil*, and gave him the pleasing Relation of what had past between her and the Earl, who was over-joyed to see in his Power the sole Obstacle against *Essex*'s Death, and then they went both together to the Queen, who enquiring how *Essex* receiv'd her last Orders? *He was never*

ver more haughty in his Life, answer'd *Cecil*; *he cannot prevail with himself to shew the least Sign of Repentance: He thinks of nothing but his Wife, and she is the sole Subject of his Discourse to those that go to him. Let him dye then, let him perish*, said the *Queen* very angrily, *since he will have it so. Let me be eas'd of the tormenting Uncertainties I am under. I am no longer against his Execution.*

Cecil thirsted too much after the Earl's Blood, to let the *Queen* have the least time for Reflection. So that while the Earl of *Essex* was expecting the Issue of the Countess of *Nottingham*'s unfaithful Promises, a Scaffold was set up in the Tower for his *Execution*, to avoid the Effects of executing publickly a Man so much beloved by the People.

So great was his Presence of Mind, that he betrayed not the least Weakness in the utmost extremity, nor could any Man go to his Death with more Constancy and Resolution. Nor did he murmur in the least against the *Queen*, tho' he might with Justice enough have reproach'd her with Breach of her Promises. He mounted the Scaffold with a becoming Boldness, and undressed himself with a chearful Countenance, recommending his Family to those about him. And drawing Tears from the *Eyes* of all the Beholders, he ended that last Act of his Life without so much as giving way to have his *Eyes* cover'd, as if he was afraid to look upon Death: And had his Head sever'd from his Body at one Blow. Thus dy'd the great *Earl of Essex*, the most beloved Favourite of Queen *Elizabeth*: He was certainly one of the accomplish'd Persons in the World; and would have been too happy, had not Love had too great an Ascendant over him.

Tho' the Queen provok'd to a Pitch of Anger by the false Reports of *Cecil*, had consented to his *Execution*, yet she soon after repented of her Resentments, and resolv'd to pardon him, sending an Officer of her Guards to stop their Proceedings: But *Cecil* was aware of this, and had been too quick for her, so that the Messenger came too late, for the Earl was already executed; which was the Account the Messenger carry'd back to the Queen. And then it was she could no longer contain herself within the Bounds of Moderation, but broke out into the Extreams of Grief: *Cecil*, (cry'd she out) *what Mischief hath your barbarous Zeal and cruel Impatience done me?* Breaking out into such mournful Lamentations, that she would endure neither the Caresses nor the Comforts of any about her. But tho' the Queen mourn'd, *Cecil* was pleas'd he had accomplish'd his end; and the cruel Countess of *Nottingham* exulted in the Revenge she had taken of a Man that slighted her Charms.

But the Grief of the Countess of *Essex* was so great, it is impossible to be describ'd. The most obdurate Hearts could not but be mov'd with Compassion for her. The Queen, whose Anger was dead with the Earl, sent to comfort her, assuring her he was at Liberty, and might dispose of her Husband's Estate as she pleased.

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Let her take away my Life, and keep her Pity to herself, said she to the Queen's Messenger, *she hath robbed me of all I car'd to live for; nor can she ever repair the Mischief she hath done me.* But the Earl's Friends took her from *London*, in hopes that Time might mitigate her Grief.

The Queen herself only languish'd out the rest of her Day's, having only this to comfort her for the Death of *Essex*, that he slighted her to the last, and wou'd never make her any Submission.

The Countess of *Nottingham* did not long triumph in her Revenge. A violent Sickness brought her within view of the Horrors of Death; and then Remorse of Conscience for her Wickedness and Cruelty tormented her. The Ghost of that brave Earl, whose Death was the effect of her Perfideousness, was always before her. And being at the point of Death, could not make her *Exit* without revealing her perfideous Actions to the Queen; and after having begg'd one Moment's Audience, she confest what past between the Earl of *Essex* and perself, how she first loved him, and then hated him; aud then declar'd her Perdeousness in keeping the Ring which he gave her to carry to the Queen with the most humble Submissions; and therewith gave the Queen the Ring; who at this Relation had scarce Life enough to receive it. And turning to the expiring Countess, with a Look full of the highest Indignation, *Perfidious Wretch*, said she, *what Remorse hast thou expos'd me to? Whether Heaven will pardon thy Crimes I know not; but sure I am I shall never forget them.* Having thus said, the Queen left her, and the Countess died soon after. —— This Discovery did so greatly renew the Queen's Grief for *Essex* his Death, that the Queen died soon after it.

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